FAA Intercom

Honing a New Approach to Clearing Runways

Aircraft had a one in a million chance of being involved in a serious runway incursion at towered airports last year. As slim as those odds were, the FAA didn't like them. So it's taking a more methodical approach to solving the problem of runway incursions.

The agency completed the first step in this process by reviewing more than 1,300 reports of runway incursions between 1997 and 2000 and categorizing them according to their severity.

"We can't manage what we can't

Move to New Messaging System Begins

NexGen is the project name for the upgrade of the FAA's e-mail system.

FAA Recovers from Rattle in Seattle

The Seattle-Tacoma International Airport Traffic Control Tower returned to operation May 30, just three months after a major earthquake severely damaged its structure.

The Terminal Platform office in the Seattle NAS Implementation Center led an all-out effort to get the tower up and running quickly despite major repairs. It took 100 tons of steel, more than 10,000 pounds of glass, upgraded air traffic control equipment, a little blood and a lot of sweat, but the FAA managed to undo what nature wrought.

The FAA has selected a contractor to integrate new e-mail software for the agency. The current cc:Mail system is outdated and no longer supported by its manufacturer.

The Next Generation (NexGen) messaging system will bring the agency up to date with the latest e-mail technology. It will save the agency money and make it more efficient by consolidating more than 850 post offices located on servers at 379 geographical locations to servers located in only 12 locations.

IBM Corp. won the 15-month contract to install and integrate Lotus Notes e-mail software throughout the FAA.

NexGen will replace cc:Mail for approximately 43,000 employees. More employees might get e-mail access in the future.

The contract award is for the first of NexGen's three phases. The first phase is divided into two stages. Stage 1 replaces the existing messaging systems at FAA Headquarters and in the nine regional headquarters and two centers. The timetable for completion of Stage 1 is April 2002.

The second stage provides the new e-mail capability to all field facilities. The tentative date for completion of Stage 2 is December 2002.

News in Brief

International Aviation Training Event Planned for August

The second International Aviation Training Symposium will be held in Oklahoma City, Aug. 27-30. The theme of this year's event is "Aviation Training Challenges Worldwide."

The symposium provides a forum for the academic discussion of issues, solutions, experiences and innovations affecting international aviation training. Organizers expect more than 300 delegates at this year's event.

For more information, access the Web site at www.mmac.jccbi.gov and click on the IATS ad or call Jacki Graham at (405) 954-1377.

URET Achieves Major Milestone

The FAA's User Request Evaluation Tool (URET), reached one million hours of use in May. The software, part of the Free Flight program, helps controllers grant pilot requests to switch to more direct routes or move to different altitudes.

The software allows controllers to look 20 minutes into the future of an aircraft's flight path. If a pilot wants a more direct or different route, the controller punches in the request and the proposed route flashes a color code that tells the controller if the request is safe. Controllers used to rely on paper flight strips to track aircraft and mental calculations to extrapolate flight paths.

Controllers in Memphis, Tenn., and Indianapolis, Ind., started using URET in 1997. Since then, direct routings by controllers have increased by 40 percent. This translates into less flying time, less fuel consumption, lower costs and greater passenger benefits.

Airlines are reporting $1.5 million in monthly cost savings.

AMASS to Go National

The FAA is installing equipment at 34 of the country's busiest airports that will visually and audibly alert air traffic controllers to potential runway collisions.

The Airport Movement Area Safety System (AMASS) processes data from airport surface detection radar. It then determines possible conflicts based on position, velocity and acceleration of arriving aircraft with aircraft and vehicles on the ground.

The FAA has been testing and evaluating AMASS at its facilities in San Francisco and Detroit. These two systems have been commissioned. The FAA will install the system at the remaining airports by the end of 2002.

FAA Selects Airports for Clean Air Program

Ten airports will participate in an FAA program to improve air quality at airports by encouraging the use of alternative fuel vehicles.

The Inherently Low-Emission Airport Vehicle Pilot Program — aka ILEAV — provides grants of up to $2 million for participating airports through the Airport Improvement Program. The grants help airports offset half the cost of purchasing low-emission vehicles and building refueling and recharging stations.

The airports selected to participate in the program are Baltimore-Washington International, Baton Rouge Metropolitan, Chicago O'Hare International, Dallas/Fort Worth International, Denver International, Hartsfield Atlanta International, John F. Kennedy International, LaGuardia, Sacramento International and San Francisco International.

Woodie Woodward, acting associate administrator for Airports, said concern about air quality could be a barrier to capacity improvements at airports. "The ILEAV program provides the

Sacramento International Airport plans to buy more alternative-fuel busses like the one at left with funds from the FAA's ILEAV program.

FAA Intercom

FAA Takes Hit in GAO Report

FAA with an opportunity to mitigate some of those concerns," she said.

Note Address Change

The Air Traffic System Requirements Service has relocated to 1575 Eye St., N.W., Washington, DC 20005.

Direct mail and overnight shipments should be sent to this address. Official FAA correspondence should continue to be addressed to the office at 800 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, DC 20591.

The office's new main telephone number is (202) 385-7500. Headquarters employees should dial x57500.

Airworthiness Directives Now On-Line

The Aircraft Certification Office and Flight Standards Service have set up a Web site that lists all Airworthiness Directives from the 1940s to the present.

These documents are available in the Regulatory and Guidance Library at www.airweb.faa.gov/rgl. The site also can be accessed through the FAA homepage by selecting "FAA Organizations" and then "Aircraft Certification Service." Select "Regulatory and Guidance Library" under "Available Information."

Names Change, Acronyms Remain the Same

The Office of Aviation Medicine has been renamed the Office of Aerospace Medicine.

Also, the name of the Civil Aeromedical Institute has been changed to Civil Aerospace Medical Institute. The CAMI acronym will remain in use.

Administrator Jane Garvey approved the changes to better reflect the support given by the two offices to the FAA's Office of Commercial Space Transportation.

Compared to other federal agencies, the FAA is not doing a very good job measuring the performance of its employees in achieving agency goals. The FAA also compares poorly to other agencies when considering how often it recognizes its employees for the work they do.

These are two conclusions from a new General Accounting Office report entitled, "Managing for Results: Federal Managers' Views on Key Management Issues Vary Widely Across Agencies."

Some 3,800 mid- and upper-level managers and supervisors across 28 departments and agencies were asked to judge if their organizations were improving decision making, maximizing performance and assuring accountability.

The report said many of the organizations surveyed face significant challenges in instilling a performance-based culture in their workplaces. The report went on to say that the FAA "was worse than the rest of the government" on several aspects related to agency climate and performance-related issues.

Just days before the report was released, Administrator Jane Garvey announced a new performance management system would be rolled out this fall (see the June edition of the *FAA Intercom* for more on the new system). Garvey acknowledged in a cc:Mail message to employees that the current performance management system is not working the way it should.

The FAA results might have been affected by residual turmoil over the Core Compensation Plan. Managers expressed concern that they were being held accountable for the success of the plan despite a lack of details about its implementation and other issues. Those issues have since been addressed.

The FAA numbers also might have been affected by the fact it is piloting the effort to reinvent government. The last few years have seen major changes in the FAA's personnel, acquisition, pay and performance policies, not to mention a widespread unionization effort. Most of the agencies surveyed in the GAO report were not experiencing such widespread change when the survey was taken.

Nonetheless, the survey numbers show an agency that appears to have a long way to go to earn the trust of its employees. For instance, just 22 percent of the managers felt that the FAA's top leadership demonstrated a strong commitment to achieving results. That compared to 55 percent for the rest of the agencies surveyed.

Only 16 percent of agency managers and supervisors felt they had the authority needed to make decisions toward accomplishing strategic goals, while 59 percent said they were held accountable. That compares to 37 percent and 63 percent, respectively, for the rest of government.

Less than one-third of FAA managers said they use performance information for allocating resources (31 percent), adopting new or different approaches to a problem (27 percent), coordinating program efforts (17 percent) or setting individual job expectations (31 percent).

The survey also found that a mere 12 percent of FAA managers said their employees received recognition for helping the agency accomplish its strategic goals.

PEOPLE

Chris Bertram

Bertram Named to Financial Post
Chris Bertram is the new assistant administrator for financial services and chief financial officer. He replaces Donna McLean, who recently was confirmed as the Department of Transportation's assistant secretary for Budget and Programs/Chief Financial Officer.

Bertram was a senior staff member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. Prior to that, he was a budget examiner in the Office of Management and Budget.

New Chief Counsel Selected
David G. Leitch has been picked as the new chief counsel for the FAA.

Leitch comes from the Hogan & Hartson law firm, where he had been a member of the firm's appellate practice group since 1993.

Prior to that, he served as senior counsel and then as deputy assistant attorney general in the legal counsel's office at the Department of Justice. He replaces Nick Garaufis, who left the agency last year.

David Leitch

Jeff Griffith

Griffith Assigned Deputy's Slot in Air Traffic
Jeff Griffith has been named deputy director of Air Traffic.

Griffith, formerly program director for Air Traffic Planning and Procedures, replaces Maureen Woods, who is serving as Airway Facilities Division manager in the Great Lakes Region.

Griffith also has been program director for Air Traffic Operations and Air Traffic Airspace Management. Before moving to headquarters, he was acting assistant manager of the Great Lakes Region Air Traffic Division from 1995 to 1996.

Allan McArtor

McArtor Chosen for Industry Slot
Allan McArtor, former FAA administrator, has been named chairman of Airbus North America.

McArtor served as administrator from July 1987 to February 1989. Most recently, he co-founded and ran Dallas-based Legend Airlines, which declared bankruptcy in March. He replaces Jack Schofield who resigned in March.

Koehler to Retire
Dennis Koehler retires this month as Air Traffic Division manager in the Southern Region.

Prior to his last position, Koehler was deputy director of the Air Traffic System Requirements Service and program director for Airway Facilities Requirements.

Koehler's replacement has not been announced.

FAAers Take no Lip from Allison

It was one of those weeks when a good backstroke would have come in handy.

When nature comes a calling, FAA employees seem to always find a way to make it to work, even if it's through Hell or high water. For employees in the Houston area during the week of June 3, it was definitely the latter and maybe a bit of the former.

Tropical Storm Allison came ashore near Galveston, Texas, on the afternoon of the 5th and proceeded to flood large sections of the state. By Friday, June 8, some parts of Houston were reporting 26 inches of standing water. On June 9, President Bush declared the City of Houston a disaster area.

Although no FAA employees suffered serious injuries, some did lose their homes and cars. But they never lost their determination to keep the air traffic control system up and running.

With roads blocked, employees had to be tenacious and creative in order to get to their jobs. Normal half-hour commutes took some employees more than two hours to complete. Some employees couldn't make it to work at all.

The DEDS displays are set permanently on wooden dollies to enable easy and quick replacement in case they malfunction.

On the morning of June 9, Controller Natalie Shelton left a friend's house in an attempt to reach Houston Hobby Tower, but found herself stranded about two miles from the facility. Coincidentally, co-worker Tony White ended up in the same area. So Houston Tower contacted the City of Houston, which provided a free ride for White and Shelton to the tower in the only vehicle that could navigate the high water — a dump truck.

Operations Supervisor Craig Graphman was in charge of the tower on the evening shift on Friday. Little did he know that the next time he'd see home was Sunday morning. Floods had cut off access to and from the tower.

So like many FAAers during the catastrophe, Graphman made the best of the situation. He spent most of his time coordinating ways of getting controllers to and from work, answering nonstop calls on Saturday about the status of arrivals and departures at Houston Hobby and coordinating with the Houston Terminal Radar Approach Control Facility (TRACON) to ensure air traffic flowed smoothly but didn't overwhelm Hobby Airport. He also worked various control positions in relief of the controllers who could make it in.

Employees at the Houston Intercontinental TRACON and Tower had a messy time of it, too. The TRACON was evacuated June 5 and 8 because of flooding. There were fears that employees could be electrocuted should the flooding reach electrical cables underneath the radar room floor. Then the facility suffered a total outage of radar, automated radar terminal system and landlines for 25 minutes on June 7.

In each situation, Airway Facilities employees had the facilities back to normal operations within relatively short periods of time. They used anything handy — brooms,

An employee pushes water towards the tower shaft. The water at this point is about two inches deep.

squeegees and vacuums — to keep water away from the radar room. Firefighters responded with trucks to pump water out of the building and airport personnel transported FAA employees between the TRACON and tower.

John Mitchell, acting operations supervisor, managed the Houston Intercontinental TRACON through the two evacuations and blackout. His contingency planning included what to do if evacuees could not return to the TRACON and if the morning shift could not make it to the facility.

Still, the planes kept coming. Hobby Tower handled 504 operations on June 9. By the next day, traffic increased to 875 operations, about 30 percent above normal because of the large number of emergency flights.

FAA Honors Six Employees with Flight

FAA Administrator Jane Garvey presented National Outstanding Flight Assist Awards to six employees for their actions in saving the lives of general aviation pilots and passengers in three instances.

A flight assist review board composed of Air Traffic employees from the en route, flight service and terminal branches selected the winners from 14 nominations. The stories of the winners follow.

John Mitchell

John Mitchell, Seattle Air Route Traffic Control Center
On Nov. 23, 2000, the pilot of a Cessna 150 was flying VFR about 50 miles south of Seattle when he encountered IFR conditions and requested assistance.

Mitchell issued a transponder code and requested the altitude of the aircraft. The pilot responded that he was at 6,000 feet. Mitchell noticed that the code appeared dangerously close to Mount Saint Helens and immediately issued a low altitude alert to the pilot, suggesting he climb immediately.

In a conversation with an FAA supervisor after he landed, the pilot said that Mitchell saved his life. When the pilot initially checked the frequency and was told to climb immediately, he saw through a small break in the clouds that Mount Saint Helens was about 500-600 yards away.

For an hour, Mitchell pursued many options, requested numerous pilot reports and made sure the aircraft was at an altitude to take the pilot safely to VFR conditions. The pilot landed safely at Eatonville, Wash.

Mitchell's calm, controlled demeanor played a large part in reassuring the pilot that his flight would result in a safe landing.

Diane LaFreniere, Prescott Automated Flight Service Station
On Aug. 5, 2000, the pilot of a Cessna 152 contacted Prescott AFSS in Arizona to declare an emergency due to engine difficulties. The pilot was forced to restart his engine three times while in the air.

LaFreniere suggested several mechanical problems that could be responsible for producing the rough running engine, but none of the attempts to get the engine running smoothly succeeded. The aircraft was at a low altitude and below radar coverage, so neither the Los Angeles nor Albuquerque Air Route Traffic Control Centers could assist in determining the aircraft's position.

LaFreniere was able to identify the aircraft's position using the Yuma aerostat, a tethered balloon that can help Air Traffic communicate with aircraft. She instructed the pilot on how to use his GPS equipment to reconfirm the aircraft's position.

Through extensive coordination with Arizona's Department of Public Safety and the Mohave County sheriff, the AFSS identified an uncharted airstrip near the aircraft's flight path. The pilot received instructions to find the airstrip. Safety personnel arrived on the scene as the aircraft was landing and verified the aircraft landed without incident.

The service provided by LaFreniere and other AFSS employees demonstrated excellent teamwork, great resourcefulness and an all-out effort on the part of the specialists to resolve the situation without injury.

Diane LaFreniere

FAA Intercom

Assist Awards

Keegan to Lead Modernization Effort

(From left) Scott, Romuno, Phillips and Smith.

Ronald Romuno, Mark Scott, James Phillips, Richard Smith, Tampa Airport Traffic Control Tower

Also on Aug. 5, 2000, the pilot of a Piper 32 experienced a fatal heart attack. The aircraft was low on fuel and carrying passengers with no flight experience.

Romuno realized that two aircraft on his frequency were attempting to establish contact with a third aircraft that he could not hear. He learned that the pilot was incapacitated and that the individual attempting to fly the aircraft was not a rated pilot.

Romuno learned the fuel situation was critical. A pilot himself, Romuno attempted to instruct the passenger on how to change fuel tanks. Although that did not prove successful, Romuno eventually determined that the aircraft was in the vicinity of Winter Haven, Fla.

While Romuno communicated with the aircraft, fellow controller Mark Scott asked the Lakeland, Fla., Tower if they could see an aircraft in their vicinity. Although they did not, Scott learned there was a Civil Air Patrol (CAP) aircraft in the area that could assist.

Scott directed the CAP aircraft to the Winter Haven area and solicited help from the pilot of a Cessna Skyhawk when that aircraft came on the frequency.

By executing a vector search pattern coordinated by Scott, the Cessna located the Piper only 700 feet above the ground in the vicinity of the Winter Haven airport. Scott instructed the CAP aircraft to maintain a position above the other two aircraft as top cover and used them to relay information. The Cessna pilot instructed the Piper pilot on how to select the fuel tank, use the throttle to control altitude and what procedures to follow in an emergency landing.

Through this coordinated effort, the Piper successfully landed with six survivors on board.

Phillips worked a handoff position and provided coordination between Romuno's and Scott's positions. Smith, an operations supervisor, provided coordination between the various facilities and airport emergency crews.

Charlie Keegan has been named to lead the modernization effort outlined in the FAA's new Operational Evolution Plan (OEP).

In announcing Keegan's appointment, Administrator Jane Garvey said, "He has built an extremely effective relationship with key parts of the aviation industry and with the FAA's main labor organizations. Both are key elements in implementing the OEP," Garvey noted.

A 22-year veteran of the FAA and a former air traffic controller, Keegan has been heading the Free Flight Office, which is developing new technology that allows controllers to move air traffic more efficiently.

The OEP is the FAA's long-term solution to bridge the growing gap between demand and capacity for air service. It is expected to increase capacity by 30 percent over the next 10 years.

OEP relies primarily on technology currently under development. The FAA will spend $11.5 billion to pursue more than 50 items to improve efficiency and increase capacity. It will complete the Wide Area Augmentation System that uses satellites to assist pilots with navigation. It will introduce datalink — used to reduce voice communication between pilots and controllers — to a wider audience of pilots.

Charlie Keegan

The FAA also plans to reduce vertical separation of aircraft flying at high altitudes from 2,000 feet to 1,000 feet. The use of advanced navigational instrumentation will be expanded so that pilots can plot independent courses when authorized by air traffic controllers.

Garvey Lauds Agency Progress on Safer Skies

Compelled by the success of the FAA's Safer Skies program, Administrator Jane Garvey expressed her appreciation to FAA employees for their efforts.

"In the three years since we announced Safer Skies, we have demonstrated that using hard data, establishing priorities and working together is the best way to lower the accident rate," Garvey said. "Our collaborative work analyzing accidents and identifying interventions to prevent accidents is producing results," she added.

The administrator thanked all FAA employees involved in the Safer Skies agenda.

She cited Flight Standards as an example of the agency's ability to meet its goal of reducing controlled flight into terrain (CFIT) accidents. Flight Standards distributed CFIT training aids throughout the industry, provided educational materials to safety program managers, and developed internal guidance for inspectors. Field inspectors reviewed and approved air carrier CFIT training programs.

Air Traffic developed and provided CFIT prevention training for controllers, updated all U.S. Minimum Safe Altitude Warning siting standards and implemented the SKY SPOTTER program to enhance the quality of pilot weather reports.

Aircraft Certification published maintenance guidelines for Terrain Awareness Warning Systems and continues to streamline its certification and installation. The office also is working on developing moving maps and advanced avionics that reduce pilot workload.

Garvey also credited the aviation community for its partnership with the FAA.

"We must maintain our momentum," Garvey said. "We know that as strong as our safety record is, we can make it better. That is exactly what Safer Skies is doing. I appreciate your efforts as we continue to move forward."

For more information, visit the Safer Skies Web site at www.faa.gov/apa/safer_skies/saftoc.htm.

Future of FAA E-Mail is in NexGen

In the second phase, new functions will become available, such as collaborative workflow that promotes a paperless environment.

The third phase will be enhancements based on ongoing analyses of emerging technology, new capabilities and software products. One example is video conferencing that should reduce the cost of travel.

The FAA-wide cc:Mail system runs on a mix of hardware platforms and operating systems. The need to replace the current messaging system presents an opportunity to install new technology and applications that improve messaging and communication capability and reduce costs through standardization and consolidation.

At the FAA's discretion, IBM may also provide support and maintenance for the system during the 9 optional years. The contract value is estimated to exceed $30 million over the 10-year life of the contract.

Jim McNulty, the FAA's NexGen contracting officer, celebrates with Karen Chambers from IBM after signing of the NexGen contract.

Subject: E-Mail Etiquette

The FAA Intercom *continues with its occasional tips on proper use of e-mail. The tips are provided by the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center's Office of Information Services.*

If you have a suggestion regarding e-mail etiquette, cc:Mail Gina T. Nelson.

DON'T SHOUT!
Even though e-mail notes are typed, a reader can almost hear the author's level of excitement in the way words are written.

Notes spelled out in capital letters come across to the reader as if someone were shouting at them. Regardless of the message being conveyed, avoid using all caps in any message.

Conversely, all lower case letters make the message more difficult to read because people are taught to look for the capital letter at the beginning of a sentence to mark a new idea. Periods and commas are road signs that tell the reader when to take a breath. Readers also are taught to look for proper names to be capitalized.

Messages with improper cases and punctuation can be misunderstood and cause confusion, anger and hurt feelings. Please be considerate of your readers.

A New Baby Boomer Anthem:
Do Start Thinking about Tomorrow

Visit DOT Web Site

After years of conspicuous consumption and a spend-for-the-day mentality, some baby boomers are just beginning to face an ominous reality: They haven't saved enough money for their retirement.

FAA Economist David Teitelbaum cites a survey by the American Association of Retired Persons that reported the average baby boomer has less than $50,000 in net assets, including the equity in their home. He cites another statistic that only one in three Americans manages to save money each year.

Teitelbaum will be appearing at seminars at Headquarters on July 19 (in the Round Room) and Oct. 17 to discuss personal finance with his co-workers. He is a financial advisor in his off time and the author of a new book, "The Procrastinator's Guide to Financial Security: How Anyone Over 40 Can Still Build a Strong Portfolio and Retire Comfortably," published by New York-based AMACOM. He also has provided advice on National Public Radio and Bloomberg talk shows.

Teitelbaum's focus on baby boomers is natural. For one thing, at 48, he's a member of that generation. He recalled growing up during a time when "Don't trust anyone over 30" was the motto and many members of his generation took mainly a short-term view of life.

As the years progressed, the boomers began to settle down, earn and spend money. But somewhere along the line, many forgot to save.

There are several reasons for this lapse, according to Teitelbaum. Saving and investing have rarely, if ever, been taught in high school or college.

Instant gratification has distracted boomers from the necessity of saving. Teitelbaum believes that as long as boomers think about consumption and not saving, about credit cards and not investing, and about today and not tomorrow, few will have the money to retire successfully.

Photo: Rojay Photographers

David Teitelbaum

The other side of the coin, says Teitelbaum, is the concept of get-rich-quick investing. He devotes a number of chapters in his book to the subject. "People think investing is as easy as picking up a magazine and investing the money. You need to work at it." He cited the recent mania surrounding dot-com and other technology stocks as an example of "fad" buying that is the opposite of patient, long-term investing.

Fortunately, the next few years hold excellent opportunities for baby boomers to catch up on retirement investing.

The amount of money people may invest annually in Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) will increase in stages from $2,000 to $5,000 by 2008. The maximum dollar amount that people will be able to put into their 401(k) plans will rise over the next few years. And people 50 and older will be able to contribute additional amounts to their IRAs and 401(k) plans.

FAA employees will be able to invest an increasing percentage of their annual income in the Thrift Savings Plan. This year, employees in FERS may increase their percentage to 11 percent and CSRS employees to 6 percent; both these percentages rise over the next few years.

"Baby boomers are really getting a chance to catch up," Teitelbaum said. "They really would be foolish not to take advantage of it."

The Department of Transportation's DOTnet Intranet site has been expanded to include more information of interest to employees and provide opportunities for employees to communicate with other members of the department.

Frequent visitors to the site, located at http://dotnet.dot.gov, will notice not only a new look to the site, but new options as well. For instance, employees may create their own personalized start page and choose what they want to see on their homepage, such as a calendar of events or an online dictionary.

Employees also can join online communities. Groups with similar work-related interests may establish their own room on the Web site to post, review and comment on documents; announce important news and information; chat online about issues and problems; or use a shared calendar.

News links will continue to be featured on the site, but a new "HR Corner" link has been added to highlight important employee information. Employees may rate the site as to its usefulness. There's a DOT briefing page containing the latest news releases and speeches by department officials. Employees can connect to C-Span and CNN, or view several electronic newsletters.

First-time visitors to the Web site might want to click on "'Visitors Center" (a link on the left side of the homepage under "Welcome") and follow the instructions on how to become a registered user. While much information is available to non-registered employees, those who want to personalize a homepage or join communities must register.

Have a question or suggestion? Contact Crystal Bush at (202) 366-9713 or via e-mail at crystal.bush@ost.dot.gov.

Incursions Now to be Measured in Terms of Severity

measure," said Bill Davis, director of the Office of Runway Safety, at a press conference announcing the release of a report detailing the FAA's findings. Using the report's data the FAA will be better able to target its resources toward solutions for both the general problem of runway incursions and related issues unique to individual airports.

Up until now there has been no way to differentiate between serious runway violations and those that present little danger. The FAA now will investigate and categorize each event in one of four categories ranging in severity from A to D, with A being most severe.

For instance, incursions in Category D are mostly technical in nature with little risk of accident. Category A incursions mean collisions were barely averted.

The number of "minor" runway incursions occurring in the C and D categories have been on the rise over the last few years, while the number of "major" incursions in the A and B categories have remained relatively flat.

The number of C and D incursions increased 41 percent to 362 in 2000 compared to 1999. While the reasons for this are unclear, Davis said he suspects that increased awareness and more stringent oversight might have led to more reports of incursions.

There were 68 Category A and B incursions in 2000, compared to 65 in 1999. But as Davis made clear, the FAA is not taking lightly the lack of severity in the minor cases or the general flatness in the rate of major events.

Smaller events in the C and D categories must be looked at as possible precursors to far more dangerous events, Davis said. Categorizing an event in one of the minor categories "is not aimed in any way to downplay the problem," he added.

Nineteen percent of runway incursions in the study were categorized as A or B. Los Angeles International, Chicago O'Hare and Boston Logan were among the airports most plagued by serious incursions.

The fact that the number of dangerous incursions has remained flat is not a sufficient reason to ignore the situation.

The FAA will consider a variety of technological, procedural and human factors solutions to address the issue.
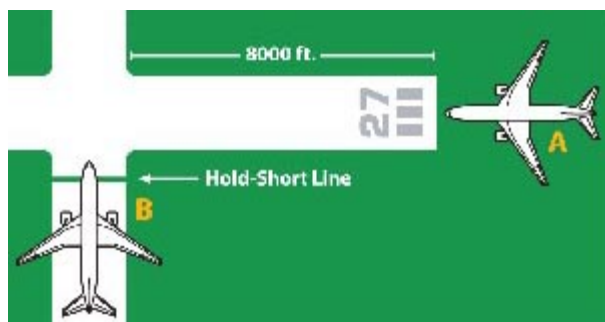
(The scale is slightly off in both diagrams for space consider-ations.)
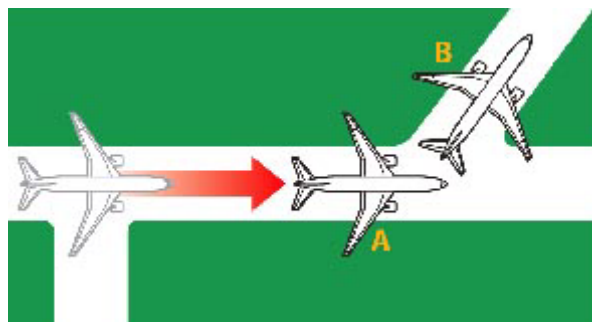
In this example, Aircraft A is on approach to Runway 27. Aircraft B is taxiing and has been told by air traffic control to "hold short of Runway 27" in anticipation of the arrival of Aircraft A. When Aircraft A is on a quarter-mile final approach, Aircraft B's pilot tells controllers that he has accidentally crossed the hold-short line for Runway 27. Although he is not on the runway, the aircraft's nose is across the hold-short line, usually 175 feet from the runway.

A runway incursion has occurred since separation rules require that a runway be clear of obstacles before an aircraft can land or take off on that runway. The controllers instruct Aircraft A to "go around."

Although the potential for a collision is low, by definition a runway incursion has occurred. This is the most frequently reported type of runway incursion.

Aircraft A has been cleared to taxi into position and hold on Runway 9 following Aircraft B, who has just landed on the same runway and is rolling out. Aircraft B is told to turn left at a taxiway, which Aircraft B acknowledges.

The controller sees Aircraft B exiting the runway and clears Aircraft A for takeoff. A moment later the controller notices too late that Aircraft B has not fully cleared the runway and appears to have come to a complete stop with much of the aircraft still on the runway.

Meantime, Aircraft A has accelerated to the point it cannot stop and exercises its only option, which is to fly over Aircraft B.

The potential for a collision is high and typifies the common perception of a runway incursion. This case is more severe than the first example, but occurs infrequently.

FAA Intercom

Sea-Tac Tower Returns to Operation

In fact, said Mark Stack, acting manager of the terminal platform and coordinator between FAA management and the engineers, the renovated tower is probably one of the safest buildings in the area. "With as much steel as we put around the cab, that's the place to be when the big one hits." The renovation ensures that the tower's occupants will survive a major earthquake and the facility will continue to operate at normal capacity.

As if to test his words, Seattle experienced an earthquake on the morning of June 10 that registered 5.0 on the Richter scale. Controllers felt only a slight vibration and thought the noise they heard was from construction.

The reopening of the tower originally was planned for May 7. But when engineers took a closer look at the tower shaft and the cab after the quake, the extent of the damage became clear.

FAA engineers jumped right into the renovation project. Stack recalled Pablo Riofrio, a structural engineer in the Terminal Platform Office, standing in the destroyed cab just a day after the quake. He was sketching out renovation designs on a napkin, which contractors referenced when ordering initial quantities of supplies.

Riofrio provided the coordination between the contractors, controllers and controllers' union. "Things went well because of the high level of trust and confidence that we all have in Pablo's abilities," Stack said.

Led by Riofrio, who at one point put in 60 hours of overtime during a 2-week period, the terminal platform staff worked round the clock to meet the 3-month deadline.

A project of this magnitude normally takes 6-12 months to complete.

Before Renovation

They reinforced the 1970s-era structure with tubular steel eight inches in diameter. Cross cables were erected in the cab to support the roof, even as controllers continued to use roof antennas for air traffic control and operate the Terminal Radar Approach Control, which is located on the fourth floor of the tower and survived the earthquake without damage.

Tower controllers operated from a mobile ATCT facility across the field during construction.

One of the hardest parts of the renovation, Stack said, was coordinating all the different workers so they wouldn't get in each other's way. During one 24-hour period, 60 contractors were on site working with iron, glass, drywall and electricity. "It was like bulls in a china shop," Stack recalled. With that kind of bustle, it was a major accomplishment that no one was seriously injured during the renovation.

The project moved along on a constant flow of information between the Terminal Platform Team, Airway Facilities, Air Traffic and the Port of Seattle. Stack lauded the support he received from controllers in the TRACON, who continued to work even while renovation proceeded on the levels above them.

"We told them this is what we need to do and this is how you need to

. . . and After

Pablo Riofrio shows off a battle scar earned during the tower repair.

accommodate us," Stack said, adding the controllers responded without hesitation.

The Port of Seattle and Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta have honored the controllers and FAA employees involved in the repair work. The real tribute to their efforts stands hundreds of feet above the runway at Seattle International Airport.

FAA, CNN Link up to Provide Real-Time Info to Passengers

The FAA is providing real-time airport status updates to travelers via CNN's airport television network.

The information will appear as a "ticker" across the bottom of television screens at airports that carry the CNN Airport Network. Passengers will see the city/airport name, the airport's abbreviated identification code and the delay time. If there are no delays greater than 60 minutes, the airport will not appear on the ticker. Delays of 60 minutes or less are not listed because, given the airport environment, they could be resolved by the time passengers are made aware of the situation. Passengers still need to check with their airlines for specific flight information.

The airport delay information comes directly from the FAA's Air Traffic Control System Command Center Web site, www.fly.faa.gov, which provides real-time airport status information.

The new service was demonstrated June 5 at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport. House Aviation Subcommittee Chairman John Mica, R-Fla., FAA Administrator Jane Garvey, CNN News Group Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Tom Johnson, and American Association of Airport Executives President Charles Barclay jointly made the announcement.

"A lack of information only compounds the frustration passengers experience when they are stuck at the airport because of a delayed or cancelled flight," said Barclay. "Thanks to the leadership of Chairman Mica and Administrator Garvey, and to the cooperation of CNN Airport Network, this summer millions of passengers will have access to additional, real-time information about the aviation system's status."

CNN Airport Network is the only live, satellite-delivered television service that provides up-to-the-minute news and information to the traveling public.

(From left) Barclay, Mica, Deborah Cooper, senior vice president of Turner Private Networks and CNN Airport Network, Garvey and Johnson gather to announce a joint CNN/FAA project.

Submitting Stories to *FAA Intercom*

The *FAA Intercom* is normally published during the second week of each month. Employees who would like to contribute articles or story ideas should cc:Mail Editor Jim Tise or call him at (202) 267-3443. The *FAA Intercom* does not print by-lines.

Photos also are considered for publication. Only copies of photographs should be submitted. Do not send negatives. Digital images in tif or jpg formats are acceptable.

Following are the deadlines for this year's issues. Deadlines could change, depending on circumstances. Contact the editor for further information.

Issue	Deadline for Submissions
August	July 19
September	August 23
October	September 20
November	October 25
December	November 22

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